

REINCARNATION

VOL. IV CHICAGO, SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER, 1918 No. 11

WAR TIMES AND FATE

How do men and women manage to get through the succeeding hours of these dread times in which the messenger boy may bring news at any moment of the night or day that the beloved has lost his life as battle rages? The world still smiles, chatters and gaily runs about to perform its small duties. Is it indifference, thoughtlessness or the hardening of the heart? Are the cynics right when they speak of the world as frivolous?

No,—that is not true. Men and women are brave and faithful. They wipe away the tears before they leave the secret room. The world of frivolity is the world tricked out for show—to be seen as favorably as possible. If Jane wears looks of pain how will John fare? If John

is silent, with whom shall Jane converse to drive away The Bat, Despair?

But more than this, deeper:—would not men die as of pestilence, in these days, if the heart of things were wrong?

Men have two natures, the dying and the never-dying. We are conscious, in our waking hours, on both sides of our nature at once. People do not realize it. Much harm has been done by talking about our souls, our higher selves, as if they were not ourselves but remote things—say toy-balloons on strings—that might get lost if we did not hang on tight to the uncertain tether by means of some obedience to priests or some queer genuflection. *We are ourselves our souls!* Say that strongly aloud when you are alone and see if it does not ring true.

Now the mystery part of it all is that there is a wonderful but no less real union of vibration and harmony amongst and between us all. Everybody knows that whole peoples, nations, often live together for a while in grief or joy in common heart-beat and common breathing. There is a still higher unity in which we live together always though we are usually unconscious of it. It is there, in that realm of unity that we find ourselves in contact forever with the source of our being and the perpetual fountain of our courage and hope. In such times as these humanity is given especial help in those levels of consciousness. All worthy men and women may, for this hour, walk with a new power and a new dignity, in that support which is vouchsafed us in these troublous times.

W. V-H.

OUR BOYS

We were at the railroad station and the boy was bidding his hostess good-by. "Come again," she said smilingly.

The boy hesitated before he replied. "Thank you, but I think in a week or two I'll either be in the navy or drafted for the army. I've tried several times to get into the navy, you know, but they wouldn't take me. This time, though, I think I'll make it. So you see this is probably the last time I'll be able to come around."

His face was white and his lips trembled just a little as he spoke, and in spite of the attempted lightness of his tone and the youthful pomposity of his bearing there was something infinitely appealing and heart-stirring about his slim boyish figure. Somehow I had never before realized how young many of our boys are who are fighting "over there," and my thought went out to them in a new way as I watched this lad.

Scenes from his young life seemed to flash by me. I saw him as a little chap in rompers playing at his mother's feet, in the park and being taught by her to be gentle with the playful squirrels that came to nibble the nuts from his hand and with the shy birds that hovered at safe distances in hopeful anticipation of a stray crumb.

At kindergarten I heard him recite with other chubby-faced toddlers:

"To do to others as I would
That they should do to me,
Will make me gentle, kind and good,
Just as a child should be."

I saw him as a growing boy poring over his history lessons and, though his cheeks flushed and his heart was thrilled at the story of brave deeds, he read about the wars of the past almost as he would of the cannibalistic customs of our remote ancestors. And I could well picture him on Commencement night delivering an address on "The Newer Ideals of Peace" or "America as Leader in the Movement for International Arbitration."

At Sunday School and church he was taught ideals of civic virtue of peace, justice and personal righteousness, but nothing of the great laws of karma and reincarnation which alone would enable him to understand the meaning of the world-catastrophe in which he was being summoned to play a part and for which he was forced to surrender the plans and ambitions of his eager heart.

How were he and the others like him able to play so well and bravely their part for which their training had not fitted them? I marvelled at the simplicity of the strong, sweet gameness which is so striking a characteristic of our boys in this time of the sifting of hearts, and I sent a prayer of thanksgiving to the Great Ones by whom I knew the strength was given.

Even now the boy's face was lighting up as his hostess spoke simple words of congratulation and good wishes. He could not know as I did the blessing she was able to give him with the words because of her knowledge of God's Great Plan. He did, however, feel an access of strength and joy and much of the strained look left his face and his laugh had a genuine ring as he

answered her. I shall long remember his smiling face as he waved good-by to us from the back platform of the train.

As we drove home and I mused on the things which the little drama at the station had called to my mind a great longing mingled with the joy and gratitude in my heart—a longing that future generations might find the world so changed that there would be less of discrepancy between the moral and spiritual ideals they were taught and the social order in which they would be expected to play a part.

Then I smiled. For did not the very incident which had caused me to feel the longing, bear in it the promise of its fulfilment? Was not this lad and the thousands like him wiping out, even though it was unconsciously, great stores of difficult karma, accumulated in past lives? Were they not thus enabled to accomplish in one life that which otherwise it would take many incarnations to do? Would they not go on happier and freer and with new power to realize the dreams and aspirations of the soul which the war had seemingly so rudely interrupted? Were not these very boys over whom my heart yearned even now beginning the building of that newer, happier civilization for which I longed?

And sometime they would know and understand and rejoice in the great Law "the heart of which is Love," whose end is "peace and consummation sweet." A great content filled my soul but the persistent wish would not be downed:

If only they might know now!

Erna D. Strassburger.

THE KARMA OF WORK

Work done selflessly is without karmic reaction. It is our goal to attain the power to work in the force and consciousness of God, as channels of His will and power, without demanding for our personal selves.

But work, to be free of karma, must be perfect work. The Perfect Deed is the end of our striving. Yet on the way to that goal are innumerable errors and weaknesses of effort to be encountered and overcome.

Work ought to be done first of all in the proper spirit. True work is God's work and ought to be done in a spirit of reverence and especially in a spirit of satisfaction and joy in the work. You have read what the critical and historical students of the great mediæval cathedrals say about the work done upon those monumental structures—how the building stones, the decorative traceries and the ornamental statues have been wrought in the zeal of joyous effort. The joy of serving is everywhere manifest in these buildings and everywhere this joy still radiates outward upon the beholder and worshipper.

He who works in this spirit must, by the law of karma, have the feeling of God's sunshine of service continually radiating back upon him as well as through him. Such a worker is a man of joy; he should account himself and be accounted a happy man.

The details of work should not be undertaken until the larger plan of the work has been fully elaborated. The plan must be comprehensive and inclusive. He who has gained the power to com-

prehend the splendor and the wholeness of the great plan that contains the ever-reverberating law of karma within the ever-recurring lives of The Whole has already progressed far enough to know that his plans should be large. Such a man ought to have a large design of life and even his smaller undertakings should be characterized by a certain largeness of manner and with evident association with a major purpose.

Once the details of work in such a plan are undertaken, all parts should be elaborated with that care which assures satisfaction and due joy of service. Carefulness in working breeds painstaking again. Substantial work has an enduring quality that lends satisfaction to all who contact it.

One's way of working follows him into the spiritual realms of life. Carelessness of work is not to be tolerated in the higher heavens. Order is heaven's first law; disorderly work is not to be permitted there. So all fact and reason exhort to work, to happy work and to honest work. We may be sure of the return.

W. V-H.

NOTE ON THE HERMETIC
DOCTRINE OF FATE

A study of *Thrice Greatest Hermes** yields rich results. The subjoined extract is full of suggestion. How little the great body of the Greeks grasped the true meaning of their highest teachings!

1. Such men (our) Hermes, in his *Concerning Nature*, hath called mind-less,—naught but “processions” of Fate,—in that they have no notion of aught of things incorporeal, or even of Fate herself who justly leads them, but they blaspheme her corporal schoolings, and have no notion of aught else but of her favors.

2. But Hermes and Zoroaster have said the Race of Wisdom-lovers is superior to Fate, by their neither rejoicing in her favors,—for they have mastered pleasures,—nor by their being struck down by her ills,—for ever living at the “Inner Door,” and not receiving from her her fair gift, in that they look unto the termination of (her) ills.

3. On which account, too, Hesiod doth introduce Prometheus counselling Epimetheus, and doth tell him not to take the Gift from Zeus who rules Olympus, but to send it back again,—(thus) teaching his own brother through philosophy to return the Gift of Zeus,—that is, of Fate.

4. But Zoroaster, boasting in knowledge of all things Above, and in the magic of embodied speech, professes that all ills of Fate,—both special (ills) and general (ones),—are (thus) averted.

5. Hermes, however, in his “*About the Inner Door*,” doth deprecate (this) magic even, declaring that:

The spiritual man, (the man) who knows himself, should not accomplish any thing by means of magic, e’en though he think it a good thing, nor should he force Necessity, but suffer (her to take her course), according to her nature and decree; (he should) progress by seeking only, through the knowledge of himself

*G. R. S. Mead, author.

and God, to gain the Trinity that none can name, and let Fate do whate'er she will to her own clay—that is, the body.

6. And being so minded (he says), and so ordering his life, he shall behold the Son of God becoming all things for holy souls, that he may draw her forth from out the region of the Fate into the Incorporeal (Man).

7. For having power in all, He becometh all things, whatsoever He will, and, in obedience to the Father ('s nod), through the whole Body doth He penetrate, and, pouring forth His Light into the mind of every (soul), He starts it [the soul] back unto the Blessed Region, where it was before it had become corporal,—following after Him, yearning and led by Him unto the Light.

* * * * *

This is distinctive of men,—to love those who do wrong. And this thou shalt do if thou forget not that they are thy kinsmen, and that they do wrong through ignorance and not through design; that ere long thou and they will be dead; and more than all, that the evil-doer hath heally done thee no evil, since he hath left thy conscience unharmed.

Marcus Aurelius.

If our dream of personal immortality were true, the human race would be horror stricken. Better be scrapped and made over in a newer and better form. We must be born again and again. Through death we hope to become some thing we aspired to be and failed to become. It is through death and rebirth that the corruptible shall become incorruptible and the mortal become immortal.

Thank Heaven for a belief that my poor half-baked personality can be disintegrated and a new expression given my individuality when next it comes to inhabit a human form. As *I* am, make *me* perfect and I shall no longer be *I*, so thank Heaven for a new face, form, environment once in a while.

G. B. Shaw, in Essay, "Parents and Children."

CROSSING BRIDGES

The Great Teacher two thousand years ago told us, with wonderful wisdom, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." If we could only remember and really understand that, and not mentally cross our bridges before we get to them, or mentally re-cross them after we are over, our measure of happiness would be much greater, and we should have the benefit of much wasted effort.

Probably no man has in each day more than he can bear, in that one day, but it is the reverting in thought to troubles past, and those possibly to come, which makes so much difficulty for us.

If we could convince ourselves of this, and then remember that all these emotions and thoughts are not ourselves, that over and above all this turmoil is our real self, our greater self, calm and serene, then we might learn to take each day as it comes, with its joys, sorrows, burdens and responsibilities; making plans seriously, earnestly, yet withal lightly, it seems life would be lived in a much more satisfactory and useful manner. Our vision is so obscured by worry and lack of faith; oh, if only we could see *clearly* what there is for us to do, and then pray for the *will* to do it!

Ella L. Cutler.

KARMA

[*Note.*—We reprint herewith a brief chapter from *An Advanced Text-Book of Hindu Religion and Ethics*, issued under the leadership of Mrs. Annie Besant. This article on Karma presents the topic in a characteristically Hindu way. The Sanscrit quotations are here presented in their English translations only. *Editor.*]

Karma literally means action, but as every action is triple in its nature, belonging partly to the past, partly to the present, partly to the future, it has come to mean the sequence of events, the law of causes and effects, the succession in which each effect follows its own cause. The word karma, action simply, should however remind us that that what is called the consequence of an action is really not a separate thing but is a part of the action, and cannot be divided from it. The consequence is that part of the action which belongs to the future, and is as much a part of it as the part done in the present. Thus suffering is not the consequence of a wrong act, but an actual part of it, although it may be only experienced later. A soldier is sometimes wounded in battle, and in the excitement does not feel any pain; afterwards, when he is quiet, he feels the pain; so a man sins and feels no suffering, but later the suffering makes itself felt. The suffering is not separated from the wound, any more than heat from fire, though experienced as a result.

Hence all things are linked together indissolubly, woven and interwoven inseparably; nothing occurs which is not linked to the past and to the future.

“How shall there be in this Samsâra an uncaused action?”

The Jîvâtma (individualised consciousness), then, comes into a realm of law and must carry on all his activities within law. So long as he does not know the law in its various branches, called the laws of nature, he is a slave, tossed about by all the currents of natural natural energies, and drifting whithersoever they carry

him; when he knows them, he is able to use them to carry out his own purposes.

So a boat without oars, sails, or rudder is carried about helplessly by the winds and currents, and the sailor finds himself drifting along under the press of forces he can neither change nor direct. But a clever sailor, with oars, sails and rudder, can send along his boat in any direction he pleases, not because he has changed the winds and the currents, but because he understands their directions, and can use those that are going in the direction he wants, and can play off, the one against the other, the forces that oppose him. So can a man who knows the laws of nature utilise those whose forces are going his way and neutralise those which oppose. Therefore is knowledge indispensable; the ignorant are always slaves.

It must be remembered that a law of nature is not a command to act in a particular way, but only a statement of the conditions within which action of any kind can be done. "Water boils at 100° C under normal pressure." This is a law of nature. It does not command a man to boil water, but states the conditions under which water boils at 100° C. *If he wants boiling water at that temperature* these are the conditions which are necessary. If he is on a high mountain where the pressure is much less than the normal, his water will boil at a temperature not sufficiently high for cooking purposes. How then does the law help him? It tells him how to get his boiling water at 100° C by increasing the pressure; let him shut up his water in a pot from which the steam cannot escape, and so add to the pressure the weight (pressure) of the steam given off, till the temperature of the water rises to 100° C. And so also with every other law of nature. The laws state conditions under which certain results follow. According to the results desired may conditions be arranged, and, given the conditions, the results will invariably follow. Hence law does not compel any special action but only renders all actions possible, and knowledge of law is power.

The Jīvâtma, as we have seen, is three-fold in his nature: he consists of Ichchhâ, Jñâna and Kriyâ,—

Will, Wisdom and Activity. These, in the lower world of upâdhis, of forms, express themselves as Desire, Knowledge and Action, and these three fashion a man's Karma, and each works according to a definite law.

Desire stands behind Thought, stimulating and directing it; Thought, energised and determined by Desire, stands behind Action, expressing itself therein in the world of objects.

"Man verily is desire-formed; as is his desire, so is his thought; as (his) thought is, so he does action; as he does action, so he attains."

On which shloka Shañkara comments that Desire is the root of the world.

We have then to study three laws, which, taken together, make up the Law of Karma. We shall then understand the conditions under which things happen, and can shape our future destiny according to the results we have chosen.

1. Desires carry the man to the place where the objects of desire exist, and thus determine the channels of his future activities.

"So indeed the desirer goes by work to the object in which his mind is immersed."

Desire attaches a man to the objects of desire, binding him to them with links unbreakable; wherever is the object of desire thither must go the man who desires it. The object of desire is called fruit, and the fruit which the man has sought he must consume, in whatever place it is found. The man "impelled by desire, attached to fruit, is bound." (*Brihadâraṇyakopanishad*, iv, 4, 6). Whether the fruit be good or evil, pleasurable or painful, the law is the same. So long as a man desires fruit, he is bound by his attachment to that fruit, and is said to have "good or bad Karma" according as the fruit is pleasant or painful. When a man understands this law, he can watch over his desires, and allow them to attach themselves only to objects the possession of which will yield happiness; then, in another life, he will have opportunities of attaining them, for they will come and place themselves in his way. This is the first law, belonging to the desire-nature.

The second law concerns the mind.

2. Mind is the creative power, and a man becomes that which he thinks.

"Now verily man is thought-formed; as a man in this world thinks, so, having gone away hence, he becomes." (*Chhândogyopanishad*, iii, 14, 1.)

As Brahmâ created by meditation, so does Manas, which is His reflection in man, have creation as its essential activity; Brahmâ embodies Kriyâ, activity, but we find that His activity consisted in meditation, thought, and this gave birth to the worlds; hence action is only thought thrown outwards, objectivised, and a man's actions are only his past thoughts materialised. As Brahmâ created His world, so Manas creates his vehicles, and by the same means, thought. Character, the nature of the man, is thought-created; this is the first of the three factors of Karma. What the man essentially is in himself, that is the outcome of his thinking. As he is thinking now, so hereafter he will himself be. If he thinks nobly, he will become noble; if he thinks basely, he will become base. Thus knowing, a man can deliberately shape his character, by dwelling in his mind on all that is good and pure and elevating, and driving out of it all that is evil, foul, and degrading. This is the second law, belonging to the mind.

The third law concerns action.

3. Circumstances are made by actions.

"Devoted to the fruits of acts, whatever kind of acts a person covetous of fruits accomplishes, the fruits, good or bad, that he actually enjoys, partake of their character. Like fishes going against a current of water, the acts of a past life are flung back on the actor. The embodied creature experiences happiness for his good acts, and misery for his evil ones." (*Mahâbhârata*, Shanti P. cci, 23)

"Nothing can sprout forth without a seed. No one can obtain happiness without having accomplished acts capable of leading to happiness." (*Mahâbh.*, Sh. P. 291, 12)

If a man spread happiness round him, he will reap happiness hereafter; if he spread misery, he will reap misery. Thus knowing the law, he can prepare for himself favorable or unfavorable circumstances, as he prepared a good or bad character, and pleasure-giving or

pain-giving objects. This is the third law, belonging to actions.

These three laws cover the making of karma, for the Jīvâtmâ consists of Will, Wisdom and Activity, and these show themselves in the world by desires, thoughts and actions. When we have divided the factors in a man's destiny into opportunities, character (or capacities) and surrounding circumstances, we have covered them all. Nothing else remains.

We find, then, that we are always making new Karma, and experiencing what we have made in the past. We are obliged to act now in the conditions we have created in our past; we have only the opportunity of obtaining the objects then desired; of using the capacities then created; of living in the circumstances then made. But the living Jīvâtmâ, that then desired, thought and acted, is still the same powerful agent as he then was, and can put out his powers within the limits he has made, can modify and slowly change then, and create better conditions for the future. Therefore Bhîshma places exertion above destiny.

A view of Karma that paralyses human efforts is a crude and mistaken one, and men should see in Karma a guide, and not a paralysing, of action.

One very commonly felt difficulty in connection with Karma is this: men ask, "If I am destined by my Karma to be bad or good, to do this or not to do it, it must be so; why then make any effort?" The fallacy of this line of thought should be very clearly understood, if the above has been grasped, for it turns upon a complete misunderstanding of the nature of Karma. The effort is part of the Karma, as much as the goodness or badness; Karma is not a finished thing awaiting us, but a constant becoming, in which the future is not only shaped by the past but is being modified by the present. If a man desires to be good, he is putting forth an energy which presently will make him good, however bad he may be now. A man is not a helpless being, destined by his Karma to be either bad or good, but he becomes that which he daily chooses as desirable: badness or goodness.

(To be Continued)

A LOST KEY

"To get at the root of the matter, Was Christ a stronger character at the crucifixion than at the baptism? Just think that over for next Sunday, we'll not pause on that now." And the teacher of the Bible class slipped easily away to other phases of the lesson.

The next Sunday he gave various interesting suggestions on the new lesson and then gradually led up to the question assigned. One man was waiting for it, for instantly there came an emphatic, "No!"

"And why not? Could one live through those three years of teaching, of combatting the superstitions and errors of the time, of facing the open and the insidious attacks of scribe, Pharisee and Sadducee; three years of contacting all the sorrows of the masses that crowded round him, of healing and comforting the stricken and heart-sick; three years of such hatred and love as probably never centered upon one being;—could one live through those and not grow greater and stronger, more loving and compassionate?"

"Yes; for Christ came into this world a perfect Being, not human but divine."

"Yes, divine, even as I see the divine in you and in every member of this class, though in lesser degree than in Him. But oh, so human too, and the humanity of Him showed all along the way. And while the divine set Himself steadily toward the purpose for which He came into the world, the flesh did at least once shrink from the ordeal, and we have the agony of Gethsemane's garden and the prayer, 'O my Father, if it be possible,

let this cup pass from me.' In Him there was the human as well as the divine, an encouragement to every one of us."

"But He came a perfect Being, divine, and therefore not subject to the sins and weaknesses of mankind; no less perfect at the baptism than at the close of His life."

"Ah, but I do not find that; on the contrary, we read, 'For it became him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering.' He like each of us, is developed by suffering."

Of course they could not agree; neither could accept the other's view and they amiably called a truce to the discussion. But while the talk went on and scripture after scripture came to mind, supporting now one, now the other, it became more and more obvious that here was a real problem. Three of the gospels record that He was 'led forth to be tempted of the devil.'

"For we have not an high priest who cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."

"Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren. . . . For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted."

On the other hand Christ's oneness with God is shown by the following scriptural quotations:

"I and my Father are One."

"He who hath seen me hath seen the Father."

"I do nothing of myself, but as the Father hath taught

me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me, the Father hath not left me alone for I do always those things that please him."

"For a good work we stone thee not but for blasphemy, because thou being a man, makest thyself God.

Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken, say ye of him whom the Father has sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God? . . . believe the works, that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me and I in him."

Christ states that Abraham rejoiced to see his day and meets the Jews' incredulity with, "Verily, verily, before Abraham was, I am."—an absolute identification of Himself with God. And not only is there unity of Himself with God and God's will but He sets up as the ideal of His people, "Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect," and teaches them to pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Yet how can human beings be perfect and perfectly do God's will? But could He, on the other hand, demand an impossibility of His followers?

And last of all is this exceedingly definite statement from James:

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to those that love him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished bringeth forth death."

There is the positive statement, "God cannot be tempted with evil." Then could Christ be?

Yet previous passages assert He was tempted. But notice again that definition of temptation. Temptation is only temptation when external allurements find a response from within and can we believe that response was in the Christ? Can we without recoiling read that 'Christ is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed? Impossible, for we see in Him absolute purity and no human frailty can blemish it.

And there we come to a deadlock—scripture against scripture; one view diametrically opposed to the other. What then is the logical thing to do? What would we do in case two of our reliable friends gave contradictory accounts of some affair in which we accepted them as competent witnesses? Would not the proper way be to consider what might have entered in to cause the discrepancies?—a difference in time, for instance, or in the angle of vision? Even a small variation in either of these in some events would make a remarkable difference in the resulting observations.

In the modern acceptance of Christianity, however, the student will find that a satisfactory solution of this problem is difficult, if not impossible. But there is a teaching that belonged to the ancient Jews and the early Christians, lost centuries ago from Christianity—the reasons for its loss can be found by the careful student. It is gradually being brought back to its place,—this key that unlocks this mystery of God in man,—and having used it we step out to a new angle of vision where these opposed doctrines blend into an amazing harmony and in awe and reverence we gaze at the wonderful beauty and glory of the vision thus afforded. The magical key is none

other than 'God's great plan for man, for God has a plan and that plan is evolution': an evolution through repeated lives on earth in which man learns slowly and painfully but nevertheless with utmost surety to differentiate that which belongs to fleeting moments and that which is real and lasting; an evolution through which 'divinity in latency becomes divinity in potency' and by which man, through the constant onward flow of the whole stream, and the gracious, ever-present assistance of Those who have already attained, and last but most important, through his own earnest endeavors, can in time transcend the human and 'come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.' All these scriptures, so puzzling without this view, fall into perfect perspective when so considered. We still have our human Christ, who really was tempted and through suffering rose above the power of temptation and therefore 'knows how to succor them that are tempted,' and at the same time we have the divine Christ, one with the Father, who, 'speaking that which He doth know,' hath given hope and confidence that because He Himself has done it, and has commanded it of us and because He is the Way, the Truth and the Life, we too shall attain unto that which is unattainable now.

"Beloved, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. . . . Beloved, now are we the sons of God and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is."

Gertrude Stewart March.

LIFE AFTER DEATH

It is one of the serious weaknesses of modern theology that it has no definite answer to the question, "Is there another life after death, and if so, what are its conditions?" The older theologians had definite answers, but they did not agree among themselves. Each sect or denomination believed that they would be the favored ones, the "saved souls." They taught the existence of a heaven and hell, and people were either eternally saved or eternally damned to the fires of hell. There was no middle ground, no just gradation of the conditions of the hereafter to correspond with the goodness or badness of the life lived on earth. In fact, it was even taught that no matter how wicked a man had been during his life, he could obtain eternal salvation by a death-bed repentance and a declared acceptance of certain statements of dogma or doctrine.

Naturally enough, such teachings and practices could not be accepted by those men who believed that theological teachings should be logical and consistent. Only those could fully subscribe to the older theology, who were able to perform the feat of keeping their theology and their common sense reasoning in two separate and water tight compartments of their minds. Some men seem to be able to do this without serious violence to their own moral and mental nature. They seem to be able to believe sincerely that the laws of thought, of reason and of logic do not apply to the life after death but only to the conditions of earth-life.

By long experience with losses of members and lack of healthy growth, the churches of to-day have learned to avoid some of those dogmas which are most repugnant to a normal reasoning human being. They have found better and more attractive subjects for sermons than "eternal damnation," "predestination," "final repentance," and others of that type. To-day it is almost only at the tent revival meetings of itinerant evangelists so-called, that the crudities of Christian theology are still made use of to influence, by the power of hypnotic suggestion, certain classes of the more undeveloped minds or souls. The more up-to-date progressive clergymen wisely choose subjects for their sermons which deal with more constructive and hopeful ideas, with the Love of God, rather than with His wrath.

In view of the fact that there are several definite ways to obtain knowledge as to the conditions of life after death, it is to be hoped that people will not be satisfied with evasions of their questionings but will persevere in their search for more light and truth. One of the best ways for men to obtain knowledge is to apply common sense and the results of ordinary experience in life to the world beyond. The laws of logic should never be neglected. The continuity of life is quite in line with the scientific law of conservation of energy in the universe. Psychical research and the facts of spiritualistic phenomena give much definite knowledge.

But the best way of all is probably self-study, if it is based on the understanding of the laws of karma and reincarnation and an accurate, even if elementary, knowledge of the various parts of

man's own nature. These truths are not theories but facts known to many of the world's greatest men of all times and ages. They are reasonable and they harmonise with the facts of life. If used as keys to the problems of life and death, they will unlock the secrets and mysteries of nature and man for every earnest student.

C. S.

THE GUILD OF THE BEGGARS

I am a beggar. I belong to the greatest guild in the world, and the oldest, too,—that of the beggars.

What do the gods do, as we beg, beg, beg?

"I pray Thee to hear us, good Lord!" We beg with prayer and incense and music; but we beg. Do we tire Them? Do They ever wish that we would stop our begging? And when our prayers are answered, are we satisfied? Do we pray as earnestly as we begged? What sort of benevolence could answer our prayers? Do They ever grow weary of listening? Can They close Their ears to us mortals on earth who implore? Some of us have great piety—we are afraid—so we beg.

When we cease begging and stand alone, and take what comes of good or ill without wincing, then we are men—and not till then. When we only think of giving and not of taking—we are Gods—and not before.

Alice L. Strong.

A REINCARNATED PIG

The following is condensed from a letter by the *Legion* Leader in St. Louis, Mo.:

In accordance with my promise I am sending you the manuscript of what my little son is pleased to call his 'pig story.' This revision of the old folk lore story was made by Raja when he was between four or five years old and without assistance from anyone.

My sister taught the original story to him. Raja had been going with us regularly to lectures, and small as he was he evinced quite an interest in everything that was said about reincarnation and the various bodies. Ofttimes after a lecture was over he would ask some question or make some comment that showed a grasp of the subject far beyond what would have been expected of a child of his age. One day my wife overheard him telling the story in its revised form to his baby brother and listened quietly, fixing it in her memory so as to be able to tell it to me. This, however, was unnecessary as he readily repeated it upon request.

Four years ago he told the story in public before an audience in Girard, Kansas, to whom I was delivering a lecture on reincarnation. Like his father he always reserves the right to make such little changes in the wording as in his childish opinion will improve the story. For instance as he first gave it he did not use the expression 'kindly' nor the statement that the wolf's face got all red and his sides all swelled out. But one day he paused in his delivery and said to me, "Papa, don't you think it would sound better if I said 'and the man *kindly* did it.'?"

His particular desire now is to have slides made for it so that he can deliver is as "a stereopticon lecture like those papa gives."

Claude L. Watson.

Once upon a time there was a little pig that went out into the world to seek his fortune. On the road he met a man with a load of straw and the little pig said, "Please Mister Man give

me that load of straw to build me a house with," and the man kindly did it. Then the little pig took the straw and built him a house to live in.

One day the old wolf came along and knocked at the door of the house and said, "Little pig, little pig, let me come in." But the little pig said, "Oh no, no, by the hair of my chinny chin chin, I won't do it." Then the old wolf said, "If you don't I'll huff and I'll puff, and I'll puff and I'll huff and I'll blow your house in and eat you up." So he huffed and he puffed and he puffed and he huffed until he blew the house in and he ate up the poor little pig.

Then the little pig got another physical body and came back into life again and went out on the road another time to seek his fortune. This time he met a man with a load of brush and he said, "Mister Man, please give me that load of brush to build me a house with." So the man kindly did it and the little pig built him another house to live in.

Pretty soon the old wolf came along again and knocked on the door and said, "Little pig, little pig, let me come in." But the little pig said, "No, no, no, by the hair of my chinny chin chin, I won't do it." Then the old wolf said, "I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll puff and I'll huff and blow your house in and eat you up." So he huffed and he puffed and he puffed and he huffed until he blew the house in and he ate up the poor little pig.

Then the little pig got another physical body and came back into life again and went out once more to seek his fortune. This time he met a man with a load of brick and he said, "Mister

Man, please give me that load of brick to build me a house with." The man kindly did it, and the little pig built him another house with doors and windows and a big chimney. Pretty soon the old wolf came along again and knocked at the door and said, "Little pig, little pig, let me come in." But the little pig said, "Oh no, no, no, by the hair of my chinny chin chin, I won't do it." This made the old wolf angry and he said, "If you don't let me in I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll puff and I'll huff and blow your house in." So he huffed and he puffed and he puffed and he huffed until his face got all red and his sides were all swelled out but he could not blow the brick house in like he did the others. This made him more angry than ever and he said, "I'll get you anyhow, I know what I'll do, I'll come down the chimney after you." So the old wolf got a ladder and climbed upon the roof and started to climb down the chimney. The little pig heard him and he got a big kettle of water and put it on the fire and got it boiling hot. Then just as the old wolf climbed down the chimney the little pig jerked the cover off the kettle and the old wolf fell into the hot water and scalded himself to death.

And that is just what he deserved because he ate up the little pig the other two times.

Raja E. Watson.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER DEATH

The subjoined was written in reply to a letter from an orthodox methodist, who had no definite idea of what would happen to her after she died:

In the first place there is no such thing as your being "dead." You can't die if you try. Your body will die, but that isn't you. That is only the house you are living in for a while. When that house becomes unfit for occupation you will get out of it, whether you want to or not. As long as it is habitable you will remain in it.

A moment's reflection should convince you that your body is not you. You believe in yourself as an immortal being; then how can your mortal body, which will presently be nothing but a decaying clod, be you? Dismiss from your mind the senseless idea that your body has a soul. Your soul is your real self, and it has a body. You are an essentially divine person and your real home is not on earth at all. Your home is higher up. Your body is not a home, but a mere "earthly tabernacle." When you "die" your real "incorruptible" body and soul will step out into the Hades which Jesus entered after his crucifixion, and in which He "preached to the spirits in prison." You will be absolutely the same person in identity, consciousness and in knowledge; and you will have to get used to your new surroundings, which you will find of a much higher and more beautiful type than on this earth. After all it will not be so very new, and it may presently dawn upon you that you have been there many times before. Suppose we call this the 'first heaven.' Remember that St. Paul knew a man,

who, whether in the body or out of the body he could not tell, was caught up into the third heaven. Now, if there is a third heaven, there must be a first and a second. As a matter of fact, we read in the Scriptures of the seventh heaven. So there must be six antecedent heavens. From this first heaven, which is a very nice place indeed, and quite good enough for anybody who has been grubbing along on a body of flesh, you will by gradations pass on to more advanced realms. You will find it all very pleasant and fascinating, because you have lived a good life; but if you had lived a coarse and sensual life your experience for a considerable period would be anything but joyous. You would take that coarse and brutal nature with you, and it would have to be purified before you could enjoy even the first heaven.

According to Scripture, Christ, after He "descended into hell," is represented as "preaching to the spirits in prison." According to the printed and established Protestant creeds—Lutheran, Episcopal, Baptist, Calvinist, Methodist, and others,—hell is a place of material flame and everlasting torment from which there is no escape. Now it is evident that Christ could not preach in a brimstone fire; neither would there be any sense in His preaching at all to souls that were everlastingly damned. That would be a mockery, an absurdity. You may dismiss all thought of a hell like that from your mind. There is no such place. To whom did He preach when He was, not in hell, but in Hades, in Tartarus, in the intermediate world, which is between earth and heaven? He may have preached to all and sundry so as to help them on their upward path, but most probably

the Christ, who on earth went about doing good, and who was especially mindful of the low-down, directed His helpful preaching to the lowest and darkest inhabitants of the next world. There is a low and evil condition for those who have been bad, cruel, malicious or very selfish. But this condition is only temporary, although sometimes it lasts a good many years. This realm you need not fear. You will not have to enter it, but you may voluntarily do so, to help the spirits in prison and tell them how they may shorten the term of their confinement. This region corresponds to our dark, dead, heavy, blind mineral world, where no light can shine. Imagine your condition on earth if you were doomed to exist underground in the mineral kingdom, cut off from everything that makes life worth living, and tormented by unappeasable desire. Such is life in this realm.

After all, the main thing for you to realise is that you will continue your existence, absolutely as the same human being, only without your physical body. No miracle will happen. You will simply leave your body behind you, and when you realise your surroundings you will go on your way rejoicing. There will be no anxiety for the bread that perisheth, no earthly cares or needs, or sufferings. You will rise higher, till eventually you will find yourself in a real heaven of true bliss.

Death is not an extinction, but an extension of human earth-life. The nearest approach to death is the moment of birth. Man's real home is in realms higher than the physical. On earth man is exiled from his spiritual home; he is encumbered with a dense, clogging, mutinous, pain and pleasure-breeding vesture of brawn and bone and

blood. His spirit is nailed to the cross of matter, for it is only through these temporary crucifixions, life after life, that it can learn the long lessons of human evolution. Death is the gateway to a freer life. It is the real resurrection after life's crucifixion. By it man is relieved "from the body of this dead" and once more wends his way to his Father's house.

John Hawkes.



We men of earth have here the stuff
Of Paradise. We have enough!
We need no other things to build
The stairs into the Unfulfilled—
No other ivory for the doors,
No other marble for the floors,
No other cedar for the beam
And dome of man's immortal dream.

Here on the paths of every day—
Here on the common human way
Is all the busy gods would take
To build a heaven, to mold and make
New Edens. Ours the stuff sublime
To build eternity in time.

Edwin Markham.

REMEMBRANCES OF FORMER LIVES

The article in the July-August number entitled "Why Man Remembers Not," is so splendidly clear and so vitally important to students of reincarnation, that it should be carefully re-read by those who may not have given it the attention it deserves.

As man is slowly and painfully evolving out of barbarism, it is a wise provision that he shall not have any remembrances of his past experiences, so that no possible suggestion may come from any of his barbarous acts to handicap him in his evolution. When, however, an individual has advanced beyond his early erroneous and false beliefs, especially the belief in the supernatural, and when he has acquired the knowledge of fundamentals necessary to understand the cosmos, and his relation to it, and his place therein, then the first glimmerings of recollection will appear, because then his development will be helped by suggestions from the experiences of former incarnations, and he will then make rapid strides from incarnation to incarnation until finally the past will have no secrets for him.

To those who have advanced to the point of understanding that reincarnation of human souls is brought about by a perfectly natural and orderly process without supernatural aid, the world has an entirely new outlook, and the joy of living in such a world is enhanced a thousand-fold by this knowledge and carries with it a feeling of power, and a will to remember from one incarnation to another, and this will is the legitimate result of the awakening truth and will be satisfied.

The certainty that what a man *knows* can never be taken away from him, and will be carried on forever through repeated incarnations, and added to in each, is a solace to the human mind far greater than any that is offered by any religion on earth; and is a greater incentive to good, and to orderly conduct, than can be induced by any fear of punishment in a hereafter; and it is an everlasting incentive to study and to develop the mind, even into that period of old age not ordinarily devoted to such endeavor.

William W. Weitling.

FIELD NOTES

The Secretary of the *Legion* gave two lectures in Denver, Colorado: "*Realities of Life*," on July 20, and "*The Personality and the Ego*," on July 21. In Colorado Springs these lectures were given: "*The Law of Justice and the War*," July 24, and "*Is Reincarnation True?*," July 25. The audiences showed great interest and appreciation and a number of questions were asked.

The "Discussion Club of Denver, Colorado, under the able presidency of Mrs. Abbie T. Hays, carries on very interesting and valuable work. Meetings are held every Monday afternoon and various subjects of interest in psychology and human life are studied. The 'Law of Justice' was the topic for study at a recent meeting. The Club numbers among its members many of the most prominent society women of Denver. Its meetings are always well attended, because the programs are attractive and well-planned. Excellent musical selections help to brighten the work.

The work of this Club is very much in line with the aim of the *Legion*. Members of the *Legion* will do well to give careful thought to presenting the truths of karma and reincarnation in attractive ways, by means of social gatherings and with grace and beauty as well as with strength and dignity.